

FACT SHEET



Omaha Lead Superfund Site Omaha, Nebraska

April 2002

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is conducting a series of response actions; providing residential yard soil sampling results; meeting with elected officials; the Chamber of Commerce, and citizen groups; distributing educational material on lead and lead hazards; and serving as environmental stewards for the Omaha community.

BACKGROUND

The Omaha Lead site includes surface soils present at residential properties, child care facilities, schools, and other residential-type properties in Eastern Omaha which is located in Douglas County, Nebraska. The total area of the Omaha Lead site is approximately 8,840 acres, where an estimated 65,615 residents are located.

In 1998, the Omaha City Council solicited assistance from EPA in addressing problems with lead contamination in the Omaha area prompted by clean-up activities at the Asarco facility. Asarco was a lead-refining plant which operated from the early 1870s until 1996 and was located on approximately 23 acres on the west bank of the Missouri River in downtown Omaha. During the operational period, lead

and other heavy

metals were emitted into the atmosphere through smoke stacks. The pollutants were transported downwind in various directions and deposited on the ground surface.

ENFORCEMENT

The EPA has provided the Asarco facility the opportunity to assist with lead response actions, and is seeking cost reimbursement from them on past actions. A pursuit is also underway to provide other specific Omaha facilities the same opportunities, based on EPA's knowledge of their participation in lead smelting/refinery activities.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST

The EPA has recently proposed the Omaha Lead site to the National Priorities List (NPL). The NPL is a list of hazardous waste sites which EPA has determined warrant further response actions. The sites then become eligible for extensive, long-term clean-up actions and related funding under the Superfund Program. The public is encouraged to comment on this listing. The public comment period ends on April 29, 2002.

SAMPLING RESULTS SHARED

The EPA recently provided sampling results to 583 residents and landlords in eastern Omaha. The agency also extends an opportunity to sampling recipients to discuss results, sampling methodology, and any questions which may arise about individual properties.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT AVAILABLE SOON

Sites proposed for the NPL, or which are currently on the NPL, are eligible for Technical Assistance Grants from EPA. These grants provide the community the opportunity to hire technical personnel for support and communication on technical environmental issues in Omaha.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you live in Douglas County and suspect that someone in your home has elevated lead levels in their body, EPA recommends that you contact the Douglas County Health Department at: (402) 444-7489. Free lead testing is available for any child between the ages of 6 months and 6 years old.

If you have questions about this fact sheet, or need more information about this site, please contact:

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